

# **CHAPTER SIX – NEW GLOUCESTER LAND USE IN THE YEAR 2000**

## **Definition And Purpose of The Land Use Map**

A land use map is a graphic representation of the goals, policies and strategies contained in the comprehensive plan document. It illustrates the preferred layout of development for the ten year planning period to the Year 2000. The map illustrates categories and intensities of development that are consistent with the goals and policies of the Town. In New Gloucester this means that generally speaking, new growth is directed away from sensitive environmental features and towards areas that have the capacity to accommodate new development.

The land use map is not a zoning map. The land use map will serve as a general guide for future modifications to the zoning ordinance with respect to categories and intensities of development. The land use map intentionally lacks the specific boundaries and detailed districts associated with a zoning map. The intent is to look at opportunities for and constraints to growth in the Town in a comprehensive fashion, rather than focusing in on individual property lines.

## **Development of the Map**

The State Growth Management Law required each community to identify two basic types of geographic areas:

Growth areas - those areas suitable for orderly residential, commercial and industrial development forecast over the next 10 years; and

Rural areas- those areas where protection should be provided for agricultural, forest, open space and scenic lands with the Town.

The Committee began their task by asking the basic question- “is this an area where new development should be directed?”. An effort was made to go through the analysis regardless of the existing land use in an area, or the present zoning of the area and to focus primarily on environmental constraints, available services, the information provided in the inventory chapter and the policy directives provided in Chapter 3.

Our approach is designed primarily to protect the rural character of the community. The combination of expanded growth areas and more defined (and protected) rural areas is intended to direct and limit future development to the designated areas. In addition, more widespread use of clustered development and regulations that include incentives for and disincentives to development in particular areas will work to minimize the amount of land disturbed for residential development purposes throughout the rural areas.

## **Rationale for Growth Area Designations**

The location of growth areas in New Gloucester was based on the following principles:

Areas designated as those where future growth will be directed are laid out such that we can hinder the pattern of sprawl, condense the location and provision of public services, and link the village areas together in some form. The designated growth areas are of sufficient size to absorb projected growth patterns and are located to improve the efficiency of service provision in the short and/or long term.

Growth areas have been located in areas that have the potential for future development, are centrally located near town services, schools and recreation facilities, and that may, in the long term, take advantage of the provision of a water or sewer system. This approach also respects the village areas throughout New Gloucester as focal points of the community, but goes further in terms of acknowledging that development, from a service perspective, should emanate out of those centers.

Growth areas have been located in areas which have limited natural development constraints. While some of the growth areas coincide with the location of the sand and gravel aquifer and its primary recharge area, the potential impact on water resources will be limited via a series of performance standards to mitigate impact on a case by case basis. In general, however, the growth areas presented few constraints in terms of wetland areas, critical natural features, wildlife areas, soils with low or very low development potential or other similar natural constraints. It should be noted, however, that these generalizations by no means eliminate the need for site analysis on a case by case basis that may produce other environmental findings. Performance standards may result in further limitations on a particular property.

Based on an area's ability to absorb development, there will be a hierarchy of uses that will be allowable within designated growth areas. This hierarchy will vary in terms of intensity of uses.

### **Rational for Rural Area Designations**

The identification of the "rural areas" was based on the following principles:

The rural area includes most of the prime agricultural areas and forested areas of the community. Based on the findings of the committee, the approach will be to protect the resources of these areas, but not to turn them into "tree museums". Strategies to be developed would encourage resource protection within the sphere of active production and management.

The soils of the rural area are dominated by those having low potential for development. The rural development components are designed to maintain a low level of development intensity. As was the case with intensity of uses in the growth areas, there is also a hierarchy of protection that will be afforded to natural and scenic resources in the rural development area. In simple form, the tools are as follows:

Development Prohibition: floodplains, rivers and streams, critical natural features areas, and wetland areas.

Performance Standards Overlay: aquifer and aquifer recharge area, wildlife areas, fisheries, scenic vistas, and trail systems,

Limited Development: large lot zoning with mandatory clustering, potentially combined with an annual limitation on the amount of new development.

## Descriptions of the Land Use Categories

Again, growth areas are areas which are relatively free from environmental and land use constraints and can accommodate new development. Rural areas are those areas where there are environmental or land use constraints and significant new development is not expected or desired. The following categories have been established on the New Gloucester Future Land Use Map (*see Figure 3 on the following page*):

### Growth Areas

Business Growth  
Institutional Growth  
Village Growth  
Low Density Residential Growth

### Rural Areas

Shoreland Resource  
Rural Resource  
Environmental Constraint  
Historic Preservation  
Scenic Preservation  
Turnpike Buffer

A more in depth description of each land use category is given in the following section.

## Growth Areas

### Business Growth Areas

The Business Growth designation provides an area or areas within the Town of New Gloucester that are suitable for more intensive commercial development than would be appropriate in the mixed use villages. Businesses that serve a community-wide or regional need as opposed to neighborhood needs, including highway-oriented trade and light manufacturing uses are considered appropriate for location in this area.

A Business Growth area has been located along the Auburn border in close proximity to the Upper Village. This area could benefit from the extension of sewer from the City of Auburn. The area consists of approximately 620 acres, of which all the existing development is confined to the frontage along Route 100. This area represents only about two percent of the total land area in town, of which at least 70 percent is available to be developed, barring environmental constraints. Based on trends from the past four years, there is no expectation that the area would be fully developed by the Year 2000. The addition of sewer might increase the annual amount of commercial development of the past, but the area should still be adequate for the planning period.

Recent development trends do suggest, that the area needs to be preserved both in the short term and long term for commercial or light manufacturing construction to support future tax base development. Therefore, it may be prudent during the implementation stage to restrict residential development patterns in this area (almost all recent development in existing business zones has been residential) and preserve it for future development potential and property value development. Within the business area, performance standards, along with those cited above, would include measures that restrict parking in the front yard, control access points, encourage rear lot development and mitigate any environmental impacts, particularly those from manufacturing processes.

**Insert Future Land Use Map**

## **Village Growth Areas**

A Village is an area where people live, work, play, go the school, do errands and limited shopping. These areas are usually oriented towards pedestrians, and cars are typically not needed to get from one place to another. Villages are generally designated due to historical land uses, clustering of homes around public or semi-public uses and the presence of an intersection, although new Villages may be created as the need for a neighborhood focus develops.

The traditional New England mixed use Village is an important part of New Gloucester's "sense of place". Preservation of existing Villages and creation of new mixed use areas is a desirable means for the Town to meet local neighborhood needs for business services, allow people to work close to where they live, reduce traffic, avoid strip development, and encourage a pattern of new development and redevelopment that is consistent with historical land use patterns. In addition, this layout will prove to be more consistent with the efficient and timely provision of municipal services. (In the Upper Village, recent environmental studies of the effect of road salt and gasoline contamination may require the development of a small, limited municipal water system).

The village centers, as one type of growth area, are designed to serve a mixture of uses, with residential uses providing the core of activity. Residential density will be of slightly higher density than the rest of the community. The combined acreage of the villages, approximately 964 acres, represents approximately 3% of the total acreage in the community, with roughly 10% of that area presently developed. Based on our projections of 1902 units through 2000, this area reflects an acreage total that would use approximately 61% of village center land if all the future residential development located within the village centers. Impacts will be mitigated in this area in the implementation phase through design and location review criteria, natural resource impact criteria and an evaluation of impacts on municipal facilities.

When evaluating the location of potential Village Growth areas, it was determined (primarily due to the presence of numerous development constraints), that the existing Business Zones on Route 100 on the Gray border and the Business Zone on Route 26 in the Sabbathday Lake area should be designated as Village Growth areas to provide for a lesser intensity of development on a neighborhood scale. Over time as the town becomes more developed and recognizable "neighborhoods" begin to appear, future Village area may be designated.

## **Institutional Growth Areas**

The purpose of this area is to recognize the presence and redevelopment potential of Pineland Center and to permit a mixture of uses associated with the Pineland Center, both on its property and adjacent properties. The Center employs up to 700 people from New Gloucester and the region, but is presently going through a transition as it examines what its purpose may be in the future. The intended mixture of uses recognizes the Center's intention to manage in its present state 1,185 acres of "wild land" along with an additional 291 additional acres committed to the Mental Health and Retardation Center. The ideal land use mix would include passive and active recreational activities, services associated with the Center (such as administrative, medical, and associated professional services) and natural resource management. Future recommendations for this area should be made after further discussion with Pineland officials and with representatives of bordering towns.

### **Low Density Residential Growth Areas**

The land areas designated as low density residential areas are those lands where there are few constraints for future development according to available resource maps. In most cases they also represent lands within the town that are close to available public facilities and are served by adequate transportation infrastructure. The purpose of these residential lands provide is to provide a transition between mixed use village and other areas of relatively intensive development and the rural lands. This area is large enough to accommodate the balance of residential development expected to the Year 2000.

Given New Gloucester's characteristics, a density of one dwelling unit per two acres of land should be considered for this area during the implementation stage. The boundaries of this area reflect the committee's finding that too much land area was previously devoted to low density residential growth in New Gloucester, which of course has contributed to the "sprawl effect". The boundaries for this area now more accurately reflect natural resource limitations, the need for buffers around resources such as the Royal River, and respect locations of existing farms. Natural features such as streams and other features such as the Maine Turnpike have been used to form more logical boundaries. The use of clustered development in this area will be the chief method of preserving rural character within this growth area.

### **Rural Areas**

#### **Shoreland Resource**

The area shown on the map as "shoreland resource" encompasses all the land area that must be considered under the State shoreland zoning program. As such, it includes areas within 250 feet of Sabbathday Lake, Lily Pond and the Royal River. It also includes streams, wetlands and wetland buffer areas. Given that a comprehensive revision of New Gloucester's regulations concerning shoreland development and protection has been mandated by the Sate of Maine, these areas were included within a single category. Within the category of shoreland resource however, there will be a hierarchy of protection. For example, limited development subject to performance standards may be allowed on suitably sized vacant lots new Sabbathday Lake, while prohibition of all development would be more appropriate for the floodplains of the Royal River.

#### **Rural Resource**

The Rural Resource area will provide for land areas within the Town of New Gloucester where agriculture and forestry activities can co-exist with very limited residential development. The primary intent of such a category is to provide for the protection of renewable, economic resources (farm and forested land), with land subdivision and residential development as secondary activities. In particular, forested land is recognized as a critical resource, based on its economic value, its open space characteristics and its historical importance to the Town as recreational land. Rural Resource areas are not suited to large-scale development due to (a) their current use as agricultural land or managed forest land, and/or (b) sensitive natural resources, (c) inadequate road networks and (d) their location away from Town service centers.

The use of clustered development, performance standards on sensitive lands and possibly a control on the rate of development in this area are planned as the chief methods of conserving rural land.

### **Environmental Constraint Areas**

“Environmental constraint areas” are those areas containing a sensitive environmental feature or features, as identified on available resource maps. In addition to simply identifying the resource area, the general purpose in establishing environmental constraint area is to target those areas that may warrant additional protective standards as applied on a site specific basis.

The following areas have been identified and mapped as area where the environmental overlay mechanism may be appropriate:

- lake watersheds
- areas adjacent to intermittent streams
- soils with low development potential
- wildlife wintering areas
- areas containing unique plant and animal habitats and State mapped Critical Areas.
- aquifer and aquifer recharge areas
- deficient intersections
- parcels containing a portion of identified trails

In most cases here, limited development could occur subject to the use of performance standards. Examples of such standards include the use techniques to mitigate impact on wildlife habitat and the use of easements to ensure public access to identified trails.

### **Historic Preservation Areas**

This category includes several areas of historic significance in the Town. Historic areas include the Shaker Village, the Upper and Lower Villages, and Foggs Corner, and may be expanded to include outlying areas where individual structures or places may be historically significant (pending the final results of the Historical Society’s inventory. In historic areas, development would be subject to performance standards that address historic compability and appropriateness.

### **Scenic Preservation Areas**

This category includes areas of scenic or visual importance as identified by the committee. In scenic areas, performance standards would focus on building siting, height and landscaping.

### **Turnpike Buffer Area**

Due to the potential for contamination of groundwater from road salt contamination, it was determined that there is a need for a setback of undisturbed land adjacent to the Maine Turnpike. Such an area would serve as a filter for contaminants in groundwater. The other objectives for establishment of the buffer area are the maintenance of visual quality along the Turnpike and noise reduction.